



MINUTES

Temporary Redistricting Advisory Commission

March 16, 2001

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robert Malloy, Chairperson

Lance Ehmcke
Jo McCarty

Joseph O'Hern
Linda Primmer

Others in attendance: Representative Steve Falck; Diane Bolender, Ed Cook, Gary Rudicil, and Jodi Steenhoek, Legislative Service Bureau; Jason White, House Republican Caucus Staff; Paulee Lipsman, House Democratic Caucus Staff; Joe Kroes, Legislative Computer Support Bureau.

MEETING IN BRIEF

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Organizational staffing provided
by: Diane Bolender, Director,
Ed Cook, Legal Counsel, and
Gary Rudicil, Senior Computer
Systems Analyst,
LSB, 515-281-3566

Minutes prepared by:
Gary Rudicil, Senior Computer
Systems Analyst,
LSB, 515-242-5925

- I. **Procedural Business.**
 - II. **Iowa Redistricting Basics.**
 - III. **Public Hearing Planning.**
 - IV. **Materials Distributed to the Commission.**
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I. Procedural Business.

Call to Order. The third meeting of the Temporary Redistricting Advisory Commission was called to order by Mr. Robert Malloy, Chairperson, at 11:20 a.m., Friday, March 16, 2001, in Committee Room 116 of the State Capitol. Ms. Jo McCarty participated by telephone conference call.

Minutes of February 27, 2001. Mr. Lance Ehmcke moved that the minutes of the February 27, 2001, meeting be approved as submitted. The motion was seconded by Ms. Primmer. There being no additions or corrections, the motion was adopted by voice vote.

Next Meeting. Public hearings to receive input on the first proposed redistricting plan will be held on April 17, 2001, in Sioux City, on April 18, 2001, in Iowa City and other sites via the ICN, and on April 19, 2001, in Des Moines. The Commission will meet upon adjournment of the April 19, 2001, hearing.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:28 p.m. A brief demonstration of the computer program being used to assist in the redistricting process was provided following adjournment.

II. Iowa Redistricting Basics.

Ms. Diane Bolender, Director, Legislative Service Bureau, noted that each member has received two NCSL publications entitled *State Redistricting Profiles* and *Redistricting Case Law Studies from the 90s*. These publications provide information about the redistricting process in each state and court cases regarding redistricting. Ms. Bolender also discussed redistricting efforts in Iowa from the 1960s to the present.

Mr. Ed Cook, Legal Counsel, Legislative Service Bureau, described the criteria used by the Legislative Service Bureau to prepare congressional and legislative plans under the Iowa redistricting process. He noted that congressional and legislative districts must be nearly equal in population, compact, contiguous, and are created without using demographic or political data. Congressional districts are composed of whole counties, and legislative districts are composed of precincts in larger cities and entire towns, townships, and counties, to the extent possible. Every attempt is made to keep cities and counties with smaller populations entirely within single legislative districts; however, this is not always achieved due to geographical and population constraints.

Mr. Cook then discussed the time frame for completion of the redistricting process. The Legislature received the 2000 census data on March 12, 2001. Therefore, a redistricting plan must be presented by the Legislative Service Bureau to the Legislature no later than May 10, 2001, as specified in Iowa Code chapter 42. The first proposed redistricting plan cannot be amended, and if it is rejected, a second plan is presented to the Legislature within 21 days of the date of the rejection vote. The second plan cannot be amended, and if it is rejected, a third plan is presented to the Legislature within 21 days of the date of the rejection vote. The third redistricting plan can be amended by the Legislature. A legislative redistricting plan must be passed by the Legislature by September 1, 2001, and must be enacted by September 15,

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2001. Otherwise, the legislative redistricting process is completed no later than December 31, 2001, by the Iowa Supreme Court

Mr. Cook informed the Commission that the Legislative Service Bureau and the legislative caucus staff offices are utilizing geographic information system computer software to aid in the creation of redistricting plans. When the redistricting plan is presented to the General Assembly, maps, statistical analyses, and a written district description in legislative bill form will be included. The Iowa members of Congress and the U.S. Senate, as well as the Commission members, will be notified when the first proposed redistricting plan is submitted to the Legislature. Maps and district descriptions will also be posted to the redistricting page of the Legislature's website:

www.legis.state.ia.us/Redist/Redist.html.

In response to a question by Mr. O'Hern, Mr. Cook said that it is sometimes necessary to split cities with a population less than that of an ideal single House district. This is occasionally required in order to keep a greater number of surrounding counties or cities within a single legislative district. Also, if a city or county is divided in more than one legislative district, every attempt is made to not divide that city or county any more times than is absolutely necessary. Mr. Cook concluded by noting that the Iowa Code does not specify whether a county should be divided into more than one legislative district before a city is divided. The only guideline provided in the Iowa Code relating to this question is that cities and counties with larger populations should be divided before cities and counties with smaller populations.

III. Public Hearing Planning.

Ms. Bolender provided historical information regarding the three public hearings that were held by the Commission following the release of the first proposed redistricting plan to the Legislature in 1981 and 1991. In 1981, the hearings were held in Sioux City, Des Moines, and Iowa City, and in 1991 they were held in Council Bluffs, Des Moines, and Cedar Rapids. After the hearings are held, the Commission must submit a report to the Legislature describing the testimony from the hearings and containing the Commission's recommendations regarding the plan. The Commission also discussed whether to use the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) during at least one of the public hearings. This would allow greater input from the general public.

Following Commission discussion about the need for adequate time between the release of the redistricting plan and input from the public, Ms. Primmer moved that the public hearings be tentatively scheduled for April 17, 2001, April 18, 2001, and April 19, 2001. Mr. O'Hern seconded the motion. The motion was adopted by voice vote, with Mr. Ehmcke voting no.

Following additional discussion, the Commission decided that the hearings will be held in Sioux City on April 17, Iowa City on April 18, and Des Moines on April 19. The Legislative Service Bureau will coordinate and schedule the use of the ICN during the April 18 Iowa City hearing for interaction with locations in Council Bluffs, Ottumwa, Mason City, Spencer, Davenport, Dubuque, and Waterloo. Depending on availability, the ICN locations are subject to change, and all ICN sites should be staffed by professional, and not volunteer, ICN staff. The hearings will be held from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on April 17 and April 19, and from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on April 18. Each person giving testimony, either at the hearing sites or the

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satellite ICN sites, must provide name and address, and will be limited to a total of three minutes of oral testimony. Anyone wishing to provide oral testimony, who did not sign up to do so at the beginning of the hearing, or those who already spoke and wish to provide additional testimony, may do so at the end of the hearing depending upon the available time. The Legislative Service Bureau will accept written testimony on behalf of the Commission, by either regular or electronic mail, through April 18, 2001. All written testimony must include the sender's name and address, and anonymous written testimony will not be accepted.

The Legislative Service Bureau will notify the media regarding the dates, times, and locations of the public hearings. Information regarding the public hearings will also be posted on the redistricting page of the Legislature's website.

IV. Materials Distributed to the Commission.

- A.** Minutes of the February 27, 2001, meeting of the Temporary Redistricting Advisory Commission.
- B.** Report of the Redistricting Committee of the Legislative Council, January 16, 2001.
- C.** A document for discussion purposes entitled Temporary Redistricting Advisory Commission Decisions Regarding Public Hearings.

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